

## Take Very Little

Hotel Books

The first time I met Sarah she said that if I wanted to ever be an artist some day, I would have to dig deep inside myself and create something of expression. And I remember telling her I already sold ten thousand records and felt like I had put in enough time to at least call myself an artist. And she said that creating entertainment and creating art are very different things, and she said that the only way that you can really create art is if it's honest expression of something. You can't express yourself if you don't know who you are. I was upset that she said that but there was still a part of me that was inspired. And uh, looking back on the experience of creating music and putting everything I can into it, I have learned that it wasn't worth... It wasn't worth losing the ones that I had to to get here. And so she challenged me to write a poem about the things I wish I knew how to say. That-  
that's what this poem is: a response to that

I guess we can take shortcuts in the darkest corners because the highest earners scale the mountain with the quickest and the thick of it  
And I would give up any of it to slow down, cause maybe the sound won't be quick, but we can at least make it painless  
And this game is the distribution of weight, angles lights trying to be a star, while getting hit by comets and vomit, which we eat to keep down negative YouTube comments  
The spotlight isn't part of the skillset, the [?] void of cohesive thought, when this love gives a lot and takes very little  
It's brittle, so you have to love what you do and stay true and find the right formula to not be bothered by the side effects  
Hide your legs, hide your neck, hide your tears, and hide your fears, and pretend I'm the fearless leader you want me to be  
Because without this fake personality, I would be performing in the streets  
Watching friends turn enemies or even worse, distant memories, or even worse, love turned to apathy with a distant voice in my head whispering, "This is the price you have to pay if you want to sell anything,"  
And no doubt any of us would sell out if only somebody was offering  
It's not about the art, it's about the swallowing, it's about the hallowing, it's about the empty vessel you want me to be so I can record at record speed  
And I'm sorry, but to me it doesn't mean anything  
So please don't give up on love and don't let your hopes fall up and don't throw up every time you think about what you could be, because the hope was real, and everything we feel is a legitimate experience  
I just wish you didn't put your faith in me

Bank notices or selfishness, alcohol or somebody's death or somebody's words, by birth or by choice:

We will all someday find ourselves shaking and barefoot before our lives collapsing

Our homes lying like dry bones in heaps of plaster and broken beams

Despair can route us there, let us calcify our bodies, stunted into a petrified forest, poisoned and frozen by tragedy

Or we can choose perspective, let suffering run off like the rain into the sea to reveal the truth beneath

The rock below, the peace and the floods of pain, the process, the promise that every scrap of our lives will be redeemed and reused as the builder makes us new

That every ounce of tragedy and ash will water and fertilize a garden of unimaginable beauty and fruit

That all of this goes somewhere, yields something

That perseverance will produce character, and character of hope that every tear really will be wiped away

That we will one day be complete, and that therefore, along the way, we can sing